

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 5959

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT - PARA 4)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP
SUBJ: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: KBL LEAD INCREASES IN MANILA

REF: MANILA 5706, MANILA 5801

1. SUMMARY: THE KBL CONTINUES TO INCREASE ITS LEAD OVER THE LABAN PARTY. IMELDA MARCOS NOT SURPRISINGLY REMAINS ITS TOP VOTE GETTER, COMPILING 650,000 VOTES COMPARED TO AQUINO'S 427,000. THE LOW MAN ON THE KBL TOTEM POLE IS STILL WALDO PERFECTO WITH 504,000 VOTES. THE COMMISSION ON ELECTINS (COELEC) CLAIMS ITS SLOWNESS IN COMPILING THE ELECTION RESULTS IS DUE TO CONSTANT LABAN CHALLENGES OF FIGURES. EXPECT FOR THE DAILY EXPRESS, THE PRESS TODAY (APRIL 14) IGNORED THE ISSUE OF FOREIGN MEDDLING. THE EXPRESS KEPT THE THEME ALIVE BY EDITORIALY LAUDING ROMULO'S STATEMENT (REF A) DENOUNCING ALLEGED DISTORTIONS BY FOREIGN PRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. WITH THE VOTES COUNTED IN 3,800 (33 PERCENT) OF METRO MANILA'S 11,500 PRECINCTS AS OF APRIL 13, THE KBL HAS LENGTHENED ITS LEAD OVER THE 21 LABAN CANDIDATES. MRS. MARCOS CONTINUEUS TO LEAD THE KBL CANDIDATES WITH 615,910 VOTES
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WHILE AQUINO HAS COMPILED ONLY 427,193. THE GAP BETWEEN AQUINO AND THE BOTTOM MAN ON THE KBL SLATE, WALDO PERFECTO, HAS INCREASED TO 77,411 VOTES, INDICATING AQUINO HAS FALLEN SIGNIFICANTLY BEHIND PERFECTO.

3. COELEC HAS ATTRIBUTED THE SLOWNESS OF THE COUNT TO DEMANDS BY LABAN ATTORNEYS TO CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK THE

RETURNS. ACCORDING TO COMELEC CHAIRMAN PEREZ, LABAN LAWYERS ARE PRESENT IN SHIFTS 24 HOURS A DAY. COMELEC COMPUTERIZED THE COUNTING OF RETURNS EFFECTIVE APRIL 12 IN ORDER TO SPEED UP THE DETERMINATION OF THE ELECTION RESULTS. PEREZ EXPLAINED COMELEC DELAY COMPUTERIZATION TO ALLOW THE LABAN PARTY TO PROCURE COMPUTER CONSULTANTS TO OBSERVE THE TABULATIONS. PEREZ EXPLAINED THAT COMELEC HAS DEvised NUMEROUS SAFEGUARDS TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS; MANY OF THESE SAFEGUARDS, HE REPORTED, WERE INSTITUTED AT THE INSISTENCE OF LABAN.

4. PEREZ ALSO REPORTED THAT THE FIVE TOP COMELEC OFFICIALS HAVE RECEIVED THREATS, INCLUDING TWO DEATH THREATS. PEREZ STATED THE THREATS BEGAN WHEN THE TREND OF THE ELECTION IN METRO MANILA BEGAN TO INDICATE THAT ALL OF THE 21 KBL CANDIDATES WOULD WIN. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, ONE COMELEC TABULATION CENTER WAS FORCED TO STOP WORK FOLLOWING A BOMB THREAT.

5. FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST PRESS COVERAGE OF "FOREIGN MEDDLING" HAS EASED, THOUGH THE DAILY EXPRESS CONTINUED TO KEEP THE THEME ALIVE IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "THREAT TO NATION, DIPLOMATIC TIE." THE EDITORIAL LAUDED FONSECA CARLOS ROMULO FOR HIS STATEMENT APRIL 11 (REF A) DENOUNCING THE ALLEGED DISTORTIONS OF THE FOREIGN

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PRESS. THE EDITORIAL WARNED THAT ROMULO'S WORDS, "COMING FROM A FORMER JOURNALIST OF NOTE AND A KNOWN FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES," HAVE THE RING OF TRUTH. ATTEMPTING "TO READ BETWEEN THE LINES" OF ROMULO'S STATEMENT, THE EXPRESS SUGGESTED ROMULO'S COMMENTS WERE AIMED NOT ONLY AT THE PRACTICES OF A HANDFUL OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, BUT AT "ALIEN POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND MANIPULATION HIDING UNDER THE CLOAK OF PRESS FREEDOM AND INTERNATIONAL REPORTAGE.

6. RUMORED DEATH OF KBL CANDIDATE PABLO A. FLORO (REF B) PROVED TO BE PREMATURE. THE EIGHT-TWO-YEAR-OLD WHO IS PLACING 15TH IN ELECTION, REPORTED BY PRESS TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND ENIGMATIC OPPOSITION FOR BEING "OVER-EAGER" TO REPLACE HIM.
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